DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

For Release February 10, 1981

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NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Guidelines Proposed for Identifying Scenic Vistas on Refuges. The Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed guidelines to identify scenic vistas on wilderness areas within the National Wildlife Refuge System that merit special air quality protection under the Clean Air Act.

Twenty-one wilderness areas on National Wildlife Refuges are classified as mandatory "Class I" areas, the highest level of protection afforded by the Clean Air Act. Under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations adopted in December 1980, the Service must identify vistas of specific landmarks or panoramas that can be seen from these areas and whose visibility is important to the objectives for which the area was established or to visitor enjoyment.

The guidelines proposed by the Service for identifying such vistas are identical to those recently proposed by the National Park Service and take into account such factors as whether a vista is mentioned in relevant legislation; whether it is well known or attracts visitors from distant areas; whether it has cultural, historic, or scientific importance; and whether developed observation points are present.

The proposed guidelines were published in the January 27, 1981, <u>Federal</u>

<u>Register</u>. Public comments are invited and should be sent to the Director (RF),

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

20240, by February 26, 1981.

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<u>Woodland Caribou Endangered?</u> The Fish and Wildlife Service has accepted petitions from a private individual and the State of Idaho to add the woodland caribou population to the U.S. List of Endangered and Threatenend Wildlife and Plants.

The petitions, authorized by the Endangered Species Act, contained substantial evidence indicating that the caribou may warrant Federal protection, according to a notice in the February 9, 1981, Federal Register.

The Service is assembling supporting information to propose listing the caribou in the appropriate category of endangered or threatened.

The woodland caribou population, also known as the Selkirk mountain herd, is found in northern Idaho, northeastern Washington, and southern British Columbia. The caribou herd, thought to contain only 20 to 30 of the reindeer-like animals, is the last remaining herd in the lower 48 States.

According to the petition, habitat changes and illegal killing are among the problems jeopardizing the woodland caribou that were once found in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Montana. They disappeared from New England around 1908 and from the Great Lakes States by 1940; none have been recorded in Montana since 1971. Separate petitions were submitted by W. Dean Carrier of Pleasant Hill, California, former chairman of the International Caribou Steering Committee, and by Jerry Conley, Director of the Idaho State Department of Fish and Game.

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